

THE PROBATION OFFICER AND THE CHILD.

The Modern Way of Getting at the Roots of Juvenile Crime and Checking It—A Day's Work With a Chicago Probation Officer.

Exclusive Service Charities and The Commons Press Bureau.)

Mr. Thurston is Chief Probation Officer of the Chicago Juvenile Court, one of the first organized and generally best equipped juvenile courts in the country. He is author of numerous books on schools, juvenile courts and probation work, and an experience of nineteen years in the work makes him particularly fitted to write on any subject dealing with children.

"Say, mister, is this the Jubilee Court?" asked a thirteen-year-old boy of the one morning the first week of our occupation of our new juvenile court building.

"Yes, son, what can I do for you?"

"I want to see your probation officer and have him send an officer to arrest my brother to make him stop hitting me."

"But why does he hit you?"

"He says if I take off these pants he'll hit me."

"But why do you want to take off the pants?" I asked. "Aren't they all right?"

"No, they're too short and the boys at school and on the street laugh at me, and I don't want to wear them."

He looked at him, and he had indeed made a mistake in the adjustment of a pair of men's trousers to a boy and had cut them off so short that his red socks showed over the tops of his shoes. No wonder he wanted to take them off. I said, all right, Mr. M. will be here in a few minutes.

"The next day I asked the officer what he did about the trousers. He said that at first nothing would do but to arrest the father but, as he talked over with the boy's number of children, how many a pair of trousers meant to them, how hard his father and mother worked, the possibility of soon getting to work himself—and the bravery that made a poor boy have shown in laughing down and outwitting the jeers of thoughtless playmates, he changed his mind and said: 'All right, I'll wear 'em.'"

"I'll wear 'em," said the boy, and all the children if I have him arrested. I guess he ain't so mean as I thought he was."

Among the foreign born children who know American ways better than their parents, and among all court boys and girls who are just growing out of childhood toward manhood and womanhood, the probation officer has a great work in thus interpreting the child and his parents to one another.

Many children under probation are of working age and should be looked after. The following report illustrates a picturesque side of a probation officer's work:

A boy was returned from the John W. Wright school January 1, 1908. He was released and paroled to me and I secured a position for him soon after his release. He worked every day and last winter when the firm was laying off most of the men, I telephoned to his employer asking him to retain the boy if possible, and he pleased me much by saying: 'Yes, I'll keep him. I consider him a good worker. I'll keep him if I can keep him as a watchman. There is good stuff in that boy.' He

was earning \$3.75 a week and his mother allowed him sixteen cents for his spending money. Rain or shine he walked to work in a poor house, had but little encouragement from his home, but reported to me regularly and although he is now released from probation he comes to see me Saturday nights, tells me his joys and his sorrows and I know that he will be a first class citizen.

Each day's work of a probation officer is a cross-section of many lives. It is not enough for him merely to call on children under his care. He must have a different purpose to carry out in the case of each child. Each time he sees the child—his parents, friend, teacher or pastor, he should push in the direction of one or more of these purposes. In Chicago, dependent as well as delinquent children are put under probation in order that their parents may be stimulated to care for them. A typical day's work might be as follows:

"Left home at 8:30 and after an hour's ride found J. at home instead of in school, taking care of the baby because his mother was washing. Made a few remarks that it is hoped, will carry conviction to both J. and his mother. Called at the school, to inquire about the N's and V. W. Gratified to see all so clean, which is not always the case. Found T. P. at home because she is out of school, and she is the top of the class. Pointed out the dangers of hotel work. Wrote a note for her to take to the South End Center."

"Next day J. D. Saw his mother. J. had just returned to work, been sick a long time. Then went over to the South Chicago Steel Mills. Secured promise of a job for S. M. 'Had some coffee and rolls in a restaurant. Am entitled to an hour, but seldom take more than half that time. A long walk to the L's to find that they had moved that morning. No neighbor knew where. I was confident that I could trace them. Have done so. Now in a slightly better place. Called on Father P. on his influence on the K. family so that they will allow little W. to go to the hospital for treatment. Stopped at police station to leave a message for Officer M. A. long walk to the K's. Left a pair of shoes for C. Urged his mother to keep him at home nights. He favors the cheap theatres."

"Took Mrs. G. with me to talk to Mrs. P. about A. as Mrs. P. is not only quite deaf but speaks only Swedish. Also a talk with A. about some girls. Advised her to keep away from them."

"My last call was on Mrs. H., the deaconess, as I was sure she would help about A. W. A. is probably obliged to send A. to Geneva."

So far as any child is concerned the care of the probation officer should be continuously directed along any or all of these lines, and in the end, that, as the welfare of each individual directs.

Under the proposed new automobile law for Massachusetts, all persons receiving compensation in connection with automobiles, such as salesmen, repairmen, etc., shall be considered as chauffeurs. It is required that in every garage a record shall be kept of the entrance and exit of every car, and the word garage is defined to include club and private garages where fee is charged as well as public garages.

An opening for professional motor racing man—a somewhat similar to the professional retained by many golf clubs—is rapidly developing. Numerous automobile clubs are anxious to hold racing meets, but find it difficult to obtain officials or members who can devote time to arrange the details and manage the events. Hence the need for an expert who can travel from city to city and assist clubs with his time and knowledge.

All horse-drawn buses have been ordered dismissed from the city of Paris fire brigade and their places taken by gasoline motors. There are at present 76 horse-drawn buses in the city of Paris, including annually a sum of \$4,000; if they could all be immediately transformed into gasoline engines the annual upkeep cost to the city would not exceed \$17,400. The most transformation, about \$20,000, will be spread over a period of six years.

A successful test of an automobile consuming gasoline instead of kerosene was recently made before the Technical Committee of the Automobile Club of France. A large omnibus fitted with a special carburetor made it from Paris to Versailles and back in about four hours. Napthalene costs barely a third of the price of petrol and can be handled with safety and with much greater ease. The main advantage is that a small amount of petrol has to be carried for the starting.

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The rim speed of a wheel of an automobile reaches the high maximum of approximately two and a half miles per minute. In comparison the rim speed of a wheel of a steam engine would be limited to one mile per minute. Wheels for automobiles must be nearly devoid of fly-wheel effect and this is an extremely difficult matter, unless the felloes are of wood and of small section. Fortunately, wood exhibits rare qualities under the condition in which it is used, in wheels, and the felloes of wheels can be of small cross-section without transgressing upon the desired factor of safety.

Care in the fitting of new magnet contact breaker parts is always requisite, as patterns are continually changing and a very minute divergence in the shape or measurement of contact breaker-arms will affect the timing. The date and number of the magnets should always be given

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In the old days steel that would stand up to the shocks of vibrations under the stress of half the elastic limit was said to be good enough to place in a safe deposit vault, but the strenuous efforts to exceed one million six hundred thousand vibrations at half the elastic limit.

Among the improvements of the past year in the making of power plants for automobiles is the use of aluminum in the crankcase and bearings. For years makers have used manganese bronze because of its strength and resistance. Improved testings of aluminum, however, have enabled it to be utilized, giving the advantage of lightness and less noise.

The best types of single cylinder runabouts will make from 20 to 30 miles on a gallon of gasoline, and the quantity of lubricating oil required per mile is almost negligible. Increasing the number of cylinders seems to have the effect of increasing the fuel consumption for a given travel, the reason for which lies very largely in the fact that with increasing power the obtainable speed is greater.

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The best types of single cylinder runabouts will make from 20 to 30 miles on a gallon of gasoline, and the quantity of lubricating oil required per mile is almost negligible. Increasing the number of cylinders seems to have the effect of increasing the fuel consumption for a given travel, the reason for which lies very largely in the fact that with increasing power the obtainable speed is greater.

Under the proposed new automobile law for Massachusetts, all persons receiving compensation in connection with automobiles, such as salesmen, repairmen, etc., shall be considered as chauffeurs. It is required that in every garage a record shall be kept of the entrance and exit of every car, and the word garage is defined to include club and private garages where fee is charged as well as public garages.

An opening for professional motor racing man—a somewhat similar to the professional retained by many golf clubs—is rapidly developing. Numerous automobile clubs are anxious to hold racing meets, but find it difficult to obtain officials or members who can devote time to arrange the details and manage the events. Hence the need for an expert who can travel from city to city and assist clubs with his time and knowledge.

All horse-drawn buses have been ordered dismissed from the city of Paris fire brigade and their places taken by gasoline motors. There are at present 76 horse-drawn buses in the city of Paris, including annually a sum of \$4,000; if they could all be immediately transformed into gasoline engines the annual upkeep cost to the city would not exceed \$17,400. The most transformation, about \$20,000, will be spread over a period of six years.